

I would like to thank the members of the General Law Committee and specifically Co-Chairs Sen. Fonfara and Rep. D'Agostino, and Ranking Members Sen. Witkos and Rep. Cheeseman for their time today and allowing me to testify in favor of several of the measures proposed in SB 647, HB 7184 and HB 7183.

My name is Rob Miller I'm a resident of Canterbury and a partner in Epicure Brewing located in Norwich. I'm here today to support these bills and specifically the provisions that raise the limits of direct to consumer sales, the exemption for craft breweries from paying an excise tax for on premise consumption sales and the ability to terminate a distributorship or diminish the geographic territory.

As the craft beer industry continues to grow in CT both the legislation and the industry will need to work together to modernize the way we do business. Epicure Brewing is a new business, in a few months we'll have been open for 2 years. From the time it took us to develop the business plan until today has been a lot of hard work and I'm proud of the business my partners and I have built and the positive impact we had on Norwich and the state of CT.

That being said I'm unaware of any other industry that is restricted the way breweries sales currently are.

As a brewery without foodservice I'm allowed to sell 9L/day/person for off premise consumption from my taproom; as you know this is 1 case of 12oz cans, however, the industry standard is 16oz cans which you can only buy 19. Imagine having a pizza party that you could only buy 1 pizza from your favorite spot, or only part of a pizza. But, you can purchase an unlimited amount from the store down the street, this tells me that the quantity is not the issue and where it's purchased is. My fear is the permanently lost sale and in-turn permanently lost tax revenue for the state.

This leads me to the provisions in HB 7183 that would allow breweries and distributors to terminate their agreement or modify it. We currently work with a distributor for our area and they do a great job for us and we strive to keep that relationship with them; however, as relationships go and businesses change it may be in our, or their best interest to initiate change. This would allow to amicably dissolve the relationship and move forward.

I thank you again for your time and consideration today, and I welcome any questions you may have.